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NOTES AND LITERATURE.

GENERAL BIOLOGY.

Le Dantec's Treatise on Biology.[1] — The author of this considerable volume is well known from a number of general treatises of a popular nature all characterized by an agreeable style, but written rather freely, not to say speculatively; that is, not based at every step on ascertained fact. His works are what we are accustomed to think of as typically French, as opposed to the typically German treatises that build up a science out of numberless bricks of recorded observations (all fully referred to bibliographically) laid down in orderly fashion.

Le Dantec's volume is readable but not epoch-making. In places it introduces the reader to the very latest ideas — as in the suggestive chapter (V) on The Generation with Chromosomes and Sexual Parasitism. In other places it seems to bring us back to an earlier age, as in the discussion of the formation of species — species being defined as groups whose hybrids are sterile.

The author treats of many things, as a glance at the Table of Contents shows: chemical activity in a liquid plasm; assimilation; chemical and histological complexity; sexuality; sexual parasitism; heredity; acquired characters; amphimixis; the determination of somatic sex; life and death; the formation of species; histological differentiation of Metazoa; parallelism of psychology and physiology; and, lastly, "la liberté et l'égalité" among animals.

The book is clearly written and will be read by many interested in semispeculative biology based, for the most part, on recent knowledge; but considering its lack of bibliographic citations and its somewhat glib treatment of difficult subjects it cannot be considered indispensable to the worker.

C. B. D.

Organic Evolution.[2] — The author states in his preface that this book "is not intended for biologists, but rather for those who would like a brief introductory outline of this important phase of biological theory." Nevertheless it will doubtless prove a very useful work in the hands of beginners in biology and of the "nature-study" teacher, and is sure to be attractive to the general reader because of the wealth of illustrative material which it contains. This material has been selected with great care and forms an integral part of the work. It is one of the best of the popular treatises on evolution.

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[1] Le Dantec, Felix. *Traité de Biologie.* Paris. Alcan, 1903. 8vo, 553 pp. 101 figs. in text. 15 francs.

[2] Metcalf, M. M. *An Outline of the Theory of Organic Evolution, with a Description of some of the Phenomena which it explains.* New York. Macmillan Co., 1904. 8vo, xxii + 204 pp., 143 pls., and 46 text-figs.

W. E. C.

BOTANY.

Plant-Breeding.[1] — This useful and deservedly popular handbook, originally published in 1895, now appears in a third edition, revised so as to cover the important period since 1900, when Mendel's law was rediscovered. The work meets the needs of a wide circle of readers, including the general public particularly interested at the present time in the subject of horticulture, the practical plant-breeder, and the student. To the student the extensive bibliography appended to the book will be especially valuable.

W. E. C.

Haberlandt's Physiological Anatomy of Plants.[2]— It is now twenty years since the first edition of this work appeared and despite the mass of new material which has accumulated in that time, the author is able to adhere to his original plan in the exposition of the structures and functions of plant tissues. There is, indeed, not so much difference between this third edition and the second published in 1896, as there was between the last named and the first imprint of 1884. Nevertheless there is a considerable amount of new material, as is shown by the fact that the number of pages has increased from 550 to 616, and that the illustrations number 29 more in the new edition.

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[1] Bailey, L. H. *Plant-breeding, being five Lectures upon the Amelioration of Domestic Plants.* New York. Macmillan Co., 1904. 16mo, 3d edition. xiii + 334 pp., frontispiece and 20 text-figs.

[2] Haberlandt, G. *Physiologische Pflanzenanatomie.* Leipzig. Engelmann, 1904. 8vo, 3rd edition. xvi + 616 pp., 264 figs. in text.